# Strategic Plan: Miami-Dade County Youth Homelessness Initiative

## Acknowledgements

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## Executive Summary

The Miami-Dade Youth Homelessness Initiative (YHI) is a community-wide, multi-sector effort to create a locally designed, comprehensive system of care to prevent and address youth homelessness in Miami-Dade County. Our shared mission is to create a community dedicated to preventing and ending youth homelessness. Youth homelessness is defined as individuals between the ages of 13 to 24 who are unaccompanied by a parent or guardian and who are experiencing housing instability.

The YHI membership is composed of over 50 partners, including government agencies, non-profit organizations, foundations, and service providers. The Initiative is rooted in the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) Framework To End Youth Homelessness and includes committees that address the core outcome areas of Stable Housing, Well-Being, Permanent Connections, and Education and Employment. In addition to these four core outcome areas, the YHI also includes four additional committees focused on the following: Funding, Data & Research, Public Relations and Outreach, and a Youth Voice Advisory Council. Our Youth Voice Advisory Council helps our community to ensure that youth perspective is not only included, but prioritized as we develop the system of care.

The lead organizations of the Youth Homelessness Initiative are Miami Homes For All and Project UP-START, the Homeless Education Program of Miami-Dade County Public Schools. Miami Homes For All and Project UP-START are supported by the 12 members of the Steering Committee who are also the Co-chairs of the eight Issue-Area Committees. The members of the Steering Committee represent the following organizations: University of Miami Office of Civic and Community Engagement, University of Miami Children and Youth Law Clinic, Florida Foster Care Review, Educate Tomorrow, Miami-Dade County Public Schools' Project UP-START, Aqua Foundation for Women, Casa Valentina, The Children's Trust, Jackson Health Services, Miami Bridge Youth and Family Services, and South Florida Behavioral Health Network. In addition to these members, the Steering Committee receives technical assistance, support, and instruction from Megan Albertson of Fetch Data LLC on systems change techniques reflecting Collective Impact[1] and the ABLe Change Framework[2].

The YHI has collaboratively developed 35 community projects, or "strategies", including the assignment of tasks and accountability. These strategies require effective partnerships between various community stakeholders as we set milestones and deadlines to create much needed services and resources for youth age 13-24 who are experiencing homelessness in Miami-Dade County.

The overarching objectives of the YHI are to:

- o Improve the knowledge, attitudes and behaviors of residents of Miami-Dade County regarding the root causes of youth homelessness and the solutions to prevent and end youth homelessness
- o Design a comprehensive system of care that delineates our community's response to preventing and ending youth homelessness
- o Ensure that there is adequate safe and stable housing for all youth in order to prevent and end youth homelessness
- o Improve the behavioral health and emotional wellness of all youth who are at-risk of homelessness in Miami-Dade County

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[1] Stanford Social Innovation Review, *Collective Impact*, http://ssir.org/articles/entry/collective_impact
[2] Michigan State University, http://ablechange.msu.edu/

- o Identify opportunities to foster connection between youth experiencing homelessness and the community, including opportunities to engage youth with adult role models who can facilitate successful transition from housing instability to permanence
- o Identify and connect youth with effective and innovative educational and employment opportunities and increase youth involvement and performance in educational and training activities
- o Enhance collaborative action planning, information sharing, resource alignment, and linkages among all relevant community systems to achieve collective impact on addressing the critical issue of youth homelessness on an ongoing, sustainable basis

## Section I: Introduction

### Initiative History

The Miami-Dade Youth Homelessness Initiative ("YHI") is a community-wide, multi-sector effort to create a locally designed, comprehensive system of care to prevent and address youth homelessness in Miami-Dade County.

In 2011, Miami Homes For All, an organization dedicated to promoting community collaboration to prevent and end homelessness in South Florida through advocacy and philanthropy, hosted the first Youth Homelessness Summit in Miami.  As a result of that convening, the Miami-Dade community launched a yearlong collaborative working group to develop awareness and engagement around youth homelessness in the county. In an effort to more accurately assess the number of unaccompanied young people experiencing homelessness, and to ground community action in quantitative data, Miami-Dade County conducted a pilot homeless youth point-in-time count in August 2013, with Miami Homes For All playing a key role, alongside the Miami-Dade County Homeless Trust, the lead agency for the local Continuum of Care.

In planning for the first homeless youth point-in-time count in Miami-Dade, the community researched and embraced best practices and methodologies utilized by the nine cities involved in the 2013 national Youth Count! Initiative[3], a federal initiative of the USICH, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), U.S. Department of Health and Humans Services (HHS), and the U.S. Department of Education (DOE) to develop strategies for counting unaccompanied homeless youth.   The pilot youth point-in-time count in Miami-Dade, marketed as iCount 2013, brought together a cross-section of community stakeholders, including advocates, homeless service providers, youth providers, and the general public who volunteered to conduct in-person, on the street surveys to identify youth experiencing homelessness on a single night in August 2013.  While few volunteers successfully engaged with youth experiencing homelessness on the evening of the pilot iCount, the number of completed surveys confirmed that there were at least 42 unaccompanied youth in Miami-Dade County.  Acknowledging that this incredibly vulnerable population of youth is known to be particularly difficult to identify and count, the Miami-Dade County community has proceeded to conduct the iCount every year since the pilot, modifying the methodology and adjusting the timeframe to improve the accuracy of the count.

Following the pilot iCount 2013 and iCount 2014, a second Youth Homelessness Summit was held in June 2014 with over 100 community members in attendance.  The convening culminated in attendees expressing strong interest in developing a unified, community-wide collaborative to address youth homelessness.  In response, The Alliance for GLBTQ Youth and Miami Homes For All worked in close partnership to establish the community collaborative to prevent and address youth homelessness, naming it the Miami-Dade County Youth Homelessness Initiative or "YHI". These co-lead agencies of the YHI worked together to engage local leadership and secure cross-sector collaboration at the Steering Committee level and enlisted the skills and knowledge of dedicated youth advocates and key stakeholders to inform the development of the system of care. The Youth Homelessness Initiative is rooted in the US

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[3] U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness, https://www.usich.gov/tools-for-action/youth-count

Interagency Council on Homelessness Framework to End Youth Homelessness[4] and includes Issue-Area Committees that address the core outcome areas of Stable Housing, Well-Being, Permanent Connections, and Education and Employment. In addition to these four core outcome areas, the YHI also includes four additional committees focused on the following: Funding, Data & Research, Public Relations and Outreach, and Youth Voice. Our Youth Voice – Advisory Council helps our community to ensure that youth perspective is not only included, but prioritized as we develop the system of care. To ensure that the community-wide, cross-sector efforts of the YHI would be cohesive, effective, and sustainable, the Miami-Dade Youth Homelessness Initiative adopted the Collective Impact Model[5], a collaborative approach to large scale social change that was initially introduced in the Stanford Social Innovation Review in 2011, which requires five key conditions to achieve substantial impact on a specific social problem: a common agenda, shared measurement systems, mutually reinforcing activities, continuous communication, and the presence of a backbone organization.

Given its philanthropic and independent role within the community, the collaborative selected Miami Homes For All to serve as the backbone organization of the YHI. Miami Homes For All committed funding to initiate the work of the Miami-Dade Youth Homelessness Initiative while also submitting funding proposals on behalf of the YHI to match its dedicated contributions. The work of the YHI has been sustained since 2014 through the generous contributions and support of the Peacock Foundation, The Children's Trust, Health Foundation of South Florida, and The Miami Foundation, and most recently, The Miami-Dade County Homeless Trust.

2015 was a year of change and growth for the YHI, as Project UP-START, the Homeless Education Program of Miami-Dade County Public Schools, replaced The Alliance for GLBTQ Youth as the co-lead agency of the Miami-Dade Youth Homelessness Initiative. The Alliance for GLBTQ Youth continues to be engaged and committed at the committee level. In addition, in 2015 the YHI was introduced to the ABLe Change Framework[6] approach to systems change and embraced ABLe Change to ensure effective design and implementation of the system-of-care to address youth homelessness in Miami-Dade. The YHI engaged Fetch Data, LLC, a consulting firm that has provided extensive pro-bono technical assistance and leadership in implementing Collective Impact and the ABLe Change Framework.

As the Miami-Dade Youth Homelessness Initiative marks its third year of cross-sectoral collaboration, the community is positioned to make great strides towards achieving the objectives laid out in this plan. As a result of a newly awarded U.S. HUD Planning Grant, Miami Homes For All and the Miami-Dade Youth Homelessness Initiative will provide technical assistance to The Miami-Dade County Homeless Trust to ensure our community adopts national best practices as part of a coordinated and comprehensive community response to youth homelessness.

The Miami-Dade Youth Homelessness Initiative is a strong and growing network of homeless and youth service providers, government agencies, non-profit organizations, philanthropic entities, and community stakeholders committed to ending youth homelessness in Miami-Dade County by 2020. This community-

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[4] U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness, *Framework to End Youth Homelessness,*
https://www.usich.gov/resources/uploads/asset_library/USICH_Youth_Framework__FINAL_02_13_131.pdf
[5] Stanford Social Innovation Review, *Collective Impact*, http://ssir.org/articles/entry/collective_impact
[6] Michigan State University, http://ablechange.msu.edu/

based collaborative is staunchly dedicated to achieving its goal of developing a comprehensive system-of-care specifically tailored to the needs and experiences of unaccompanied homeless youth.

## Youth Experiencing Homelessness in Miami-Dade County

At the close of the 2015-2016 school year, there were 6,103[7] documented homeless students in Miami-Dade County. Beyond this population of documented homeless youth is a sub-population that is difficult to identify and assist. The target population of the Miami-Dade Youth Homelessness Initiative are homeless youth, ages 13-24, who are unaccompanied by guardians or parents.  Under the HUD definition[8], unaccompanied homeless youth could be living on the street, living in abandoned buildings, living in their cars or be runaways.  Our community also recognizes that many unaccompanied homeless youth are couch surfing or engaged in dangerous sexual behavior in exchange for a place to sleep. A significant percentage of unaccompanied homeless youth may be youth transitioning out of foster care[9]. Nationally there are estimates that up to 40% of youth experiencing homelessness identify as LGBT[10]. Many of these youth have been kicked out of their homes because of their sexual orientation or gender identification.

According to the 2016 iCount (youth point-in-time count), the official number of unaccompanied homeless youth in Miami-Dade County is 132, but it is generally accepted that this a large under-report. The regular Point-in-Time count conducted in January 2016 identified 177[11] homeless youth living in emergency or transitional shelter, including unaccompanied and parenting youth.  According to Miami-Dade County Public Schools, in August 2016, there were 6,103 homeless students enrolled in the school district, 248[12] of whom were documented as "unaccompanied."  In the 2015-2016 academic year, Florida International University's Fostering Panther Pride, a university program that offers academic and support services to undergraduate students identified as homeless or former foster youth, assisted 54 homeless students. In calendar year 2015, Lotus House, a shelter dedicated to improving the lives of homeless women, youth, and children in Miami, served 76 homeless youth between the ages of 17-24.  In 2015, Project SAFE, a program that provides support services to LGBTQ youth experiencing or at-risk of experiencing homelessness, served 57 youth clients[13].  In calendar year 2015, Miami Bridge Youth and Family Services sheltered 71 minor youth (ages 10-17) through its Runaway and Homeless Youth Program. In March 2016, Camillus House, a homeless shelter and service provider, launched an emergency shelter program for youth.  In the six month period of March 2016 to August 2016, Camillus House has provided

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[7] Homeless student data provided by MDCPS Project UP-START.  Official figures to be released by the Florida Department of Education in late 2016.

[8] Department of Housing and Urban Development, *Children and Youth and HUD's Homeless Definition,* https://www.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/HUDs-Homeless-Definition-as-it-Relates-to-Children-and-Youth.pdf

[9] Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago, http://www.chapinhall.org/research/inside/predictors-homelessness-during-transition-foster-care-adulthood

[10] True Colors Fund, https://truecolorsfund.org/our-issue/

[11] There may be duplication in the data from the iCount2016 (youth point-in-time census) and the regular Point-in-Time count conducted on a single night in January 2016

[12] Homeless student data provided by MDCPS Project UP-START.  Official figures to be released by the Florida Department of Education in late 2016.

[13] Represents youth clients served between February 2015 – December 2015

shelter to 27 unaccompanied homeless youth through its new youth emergency shelter beds[14].   In calendar year 2015, 582 unique youth clients between the ages of 13 to 24 years old contacted the countywide homeless helpline seeking homeless assistance or information. Of those 582 unique callers, over 65% identified as Black or African American, a figure consistent with the trend across the U.S. of over-representation of African-Americans among people experiencing homelessness[15][16].   Further, just over 30% of the 582 youth callers identified as a single parent with a child or children.  Due to the stigma associated with homelessness, we believe there are many more unaccompanied homeless youth in Miami-Dade County than have been identified through the official homeless youth point-in-time count. The under-reporting and the hard-to-reach characteristics of youth experiencing homelessness are a nationwide phenomenon that is being closely studied by the University of Chicago – Chapin Hall as a component of the Voices of Youth Count[17] research initiative, which will  further reinforce the need for a more comprehensive systemic and sustainable approach to youth homelessness.

Unaccompanied homeless youth are surviving day-to-day with little to no assistance, hiding their housing issues for fear of being placed in the custody of the Department of Children and Families or other programs. There are many organizations in Miami-Dade County who serve youth and the individuals experiencing homelessness, but there are barriers to accessing services, including a lack of communication among providers and duplication of services.

## Common Agenda: YHI Mission, Vision, and Objectives

 The Miami-Dade Youth Homelessness Initiative has defined a common agenda that includes the guiding principles of our community collaborative, our shared vision and mission, and the overarching objectives of our collective work.  The organizational structure of the YHI was intentionally developed as a framework for change that allows the community collaborative to divide work and prioritize projects across core outcome areas, track progress across the initiative, and adapt quickly in response to new information related to youth homelessness in our local context.

### Vision

To ensure all youth in Miami-Dade County have safe and stable housing.

### Mission

To create a community dedicated to preventing and ending youth homelessness.

### Goal

To work in partnership with multi-sector organizations to create a comprehensive system-of-care design for preventing and addressing youth homelessness in Miami-Dade County.

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[14] This number specifically reflects youth between the ages of 18-24 years old who were clients of the youth pilot program.  It does not include homeless youth clients who were served through other Camillus shelter programs during the same period.

[15] Department of Housing and Urban Development, *The 2015 Annual Homeless Assessment Report to Congress*, https://www.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/2015-AHAR-Part-1.pdf

[16] USICH, *Council Confronts Racial Disparities in Homelessness, Reducing Criminal Justice Involvement*, https://www.usich.gov/news/council-meeting-update-October-2015

[17] http://www.voicesofyouthcount.org/

## Principles

Progress on meeting the YHI vision can only be accomplished through enacting the following principles:

- We are Youth-Centered
    - Youth at-risk of experiencing homelessness or those who have experienced homelessness are at the table and have equal power
    - Youth perspectives are gathered and are the drivers of decision-making

- We Build Community Capacity to Promote Safe and Stable Housing for Youth
    - Develop partnerships with natural allies and actively and consistently engage partners
    - Identify and engage the 'unusual suspects' – organizations, groups, and individuals whose work or experiences intersect with youth homelessness
    - Improve networking, cooperation, and coordination across community partners
    - Build collaborative relations in order to achieve a common purpose

- We Use an Integrated Approach to Addressing Youth Homelessness, Following the Collective Impact Model
    - Adopt a systems perspective to addressing community needs
    - Align systems around issues and "prevention first"
    - Build cohesive delivery systems for youth development

- We are Problem-Centered
    - Data-driven decision making of where to prioritize efforts
    - Bold and passionate leadership around innovative approaches to prevention of youth homelessness
    - Long-term perspective to preventing and ending youth homelessness

## Values

The values held by YHI committee members that guide our actions relevant to our principles are:

- Competence: Demonstrating expertise in carrying out responsibilities and inspiring others
- Integrity: Behavior that is honest, fair, trustworthy, sincere and demonstrates strength of character
- Teamwork: Working together toward a common goal in an environment of mutual trust
- Diversity: Respect for individual beliefs, uniqueness and differences
- Compassion/Empathy: Advocating for and speaking on behalf of disenfranchised youth
- Inclusivity: Prioritizing and demonstrating cultural competence
- Leadership: Being a community leader that educates and promotes core values of YHI

## Overarching Objectives

The overarching objectives of the YHI for 2016 - 2017 and beyond are to:

- Improve the knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors of residents of Miami-Dade County regarding the root causes of, and solutions to, ending and preventing youth homelessness
- Design a comprehensive system of care that delineates our community's response to preventing and ending youth homelessness
- Ensure that there is adequate safe and stable housing for all youth in order to prevent and end youth homelessness

o   Improve the behavioral health and emotional wellness of all youth who are at-risk of homelessness in Miami-Dade County

o   Identify opportunities to foster connection between youth experiencing homelessness and the community, including opportunities to engage youth with adult role models who can facilitate successful transition from housing instability to permanence

o   Identify and connect youth with effective and innovative educational and employment opportunities and increase youth involvement and performance in educational and training activities

o   Enhance collaborative action planning, information sharing, resource alignment, and linkages among all relevant community systems to achieve collective impact on addressing the critical issue of youth homelessness on an ongoing, sustainable basis

## YHI Organizational Structure

### YHI Steering Committee

The Steering Committee is the governing body of the YHI and is responsible for aligning goals, objectives and activities with the YHI vision to develop a system of care to prevent and end youth homelessness in Miami-Dade County. Steering Committee membership consists of the Steering Committee Co-Chairs, Issue-Area Committee Co-Chairs, Backbone Support staff, and Technical Assistance consultants.  YHI Steering Committee meetings are held bi-monthly, in order to maximize inclusiveness as well as efficiency and effectiveness of discussion and decision-making across the collaborative.

Roles of the Steering Committee include:

* Ensure that the work of the Steering Committee maintains a focus on sustainability and systemic solutions
* Define the overall goals of the YHI
* Establish objectives to measure progress toward goals
* Ensure that objectives are specific, measureable, assessed, realistic, and timely
* Create committees to work on objectives and strategies
* Support committees in planning and execution of strategies
* Own the strategic plan
* Uphold the standards in the vision and values statements
* Conduct community program related assessments every 3-5 years
* Hold committees and strategy champions accountable for making progress on objectives
* Approve changes to goals and objectives and note any concerns based on a consensual decision making model (everyone agrees or is willing to support the decision)
* Create ad hoc committees to focus on particular issues (e.g., homeless youth point-in-time count)
* Define membership roles and responsibilities for YHI Steering Committee
* Orient new members
* Determine/approve appropriate logo usage

### YHI Issue-Area Committees

The Issue-Area Committees are the community-level workgroups that develop, plan, and execute YHI strategies to achieve measureable outcomes towards preventing and ending youth homelessness in Miami-Dade County. Each Committee is an inclusive body that welcomes all interested individuals and organizations in a particular targeted area that has been identified and prioritized by the YHI Steering Committee. Each Issue-Area Committee has the authority to develop strategies to meet key objectives,

make recommendations to the YHI Steering Committee for new objectives, make decisions to change strategies to better meet objectives, and is required to incorporate a data-driven process to monitor progress of strategies in meeting objectives.  YHI Issue-Area Committees report to the YHI Steering Committee at least once every two months through a report submitted by the Committee Co-Chair.

The Initiative is rooted in the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness Framework To End Youth Homelessness and includes Issue-Area Committees that address the core outcome areas:

- o **Stable Housing** includes a safe, stable, reliable, and developmentally appropriate place to call home with access to supportive services as necessary

- o **Well-Being** includes physical health and social/emotional well-being;  the development of key competencies, attitudes, and behaviors that equip a young person to succeed across multiple domains of daily life, including school, relationships, and community; the ability to maintain positive relationships with others, solve problems, experience empathy, and manage emotions

- o **Permanent Connections** include healthy ongoing attachments to mentors, family, schools, positive social networks, and caring adults

- o **Education and Employment** includes high performance in and completion of educational and training activities, especially for younger youth, and starting and maintaining adequate and stable employment for older youth.

In addition to these four core outcome areas, the YHI also includes four additional Issue-Area Committees focused on the following:

- o **Funding:** Works towards alignment of the local philanthropic and government funding communities to complement YHI programmatic strategies and ensure effective coordination of resources resulting in increased and scalable impact. Reviews grant proposals written by Issue-Area Committees.

- o **Data & Research:** Collects currently available data and information regarding youth experiencing homelessness in Miami-Dade to better define the issue and assess the prevalence of youth homelessness.  Lead Committee responsible for the design, implementation, and analysis of new local data collection efforts.

- o  **Public Relations/Outreach:** Develops public relations and media strategies specifically targeted towards the public to increase awareness of youth homelessness in Miami-Dade County and to engage the community in actively participating in the movement to prevent and end youth homelessness.  Develops outreach strategies directed towards youth experiencing homelessness to better connect youth with existing resources and supportive services.

- o **Youth Voice – Advisory Council:** The YHI is youth-centered and committed to amplifying and prioritizing the voice and perspectives of youth with lived experience in planning process. The Youth Voice-Advisory Council has reviewed and provided feedback on every strategy included in this plan and will continue to meet at least bi-monthly to provide input on the implementation

of the Strategic Plan. The YHI Committees will be responsive to the recommendations of our youth.

*Committee Co-Chairs*

Each Committee has either one or two designated Co-chairs who maintain Committee membership rosters, organize the meetings and the agendas, facilitate the meetings, monitor achievement of objectives and progress towards completing strategies, and report to the YHI Steering Committee. Co-Chairs are responsible for identifying Strategy Champions within the Committee to manage Committee strategies. Co-Chairs also identify Committee members who, as a result of their expertise, agency connection, and influence, are best positioned to complete tasks and action steps.

*Committee Members*

YHI Committee members are the lifeblood of the YHI. YHI Committee members represent over 50 youth-serving or youth-focused agencies, service providers, institutions, non-profits, and philanthropic organizations from across Miami-Dade that are dedicated to preventing and ending youth homelessness. The diversity of YHI Committee membership demonstrates the community's commitment to cross-sectoral collaboration and the YHI's collective acknowledgement that strong partnerships are key to success: no organization can do it alone.

YHI Committee Members apply their professional and personal experience, influence, and expertise in determining the initiative's direction and strategies. Committee members actively work on the strategies and action steps and adhere to YHI values, policies and procedures. Members are expected to make decisions for the good of the community as a whole. YHI Committee members meet between 8-12 times per year.

As part of their role and responsibilities as members of the YHI Issue-Area Committee, members

- Conduct best practice research and develop a understanding of root causes
- Develop and implement strategies to meet YHI Steering Committee objectives
- Identify metrics (how to measure results)
- Produce quarterly progress reports for submission to the YHI Steering Committee
- Measure results
- Identify opportunities for private/public partnerships
- Leverage additional resources, including assisting with fundraising and grant writing as appropriate

*Committee Strategy Champions*

Through the work of each Committee, champions will be identified for each strategy included in the YHI's Strategic Plan. An individual/organization may serve as a champion for a specific strategy if the organization has some kind of involvement with or connection to the strategy. An individual/organization may serve as a champion for a specific strategy if the organization has some kind of involvement with or connection to the strategy.
Strategy Champion Roles and Responsibilities include:
- Working with partners to articulate actions steps, timeline, and process measures associated with implementing the strategy
- Providing the Committee Co-Chairs with updates/information on progress and barriers related to implementation of actions steps, and process measures and outputs listed as part of the strategy
- Advocating for fulfillment of the strategy in own organization and among community partners

- Serving as a resource for others wanting to become involved with the strategy
- As appropriate, fulfilling the action steps of the strategy
- Identifying and participating in efforts to secure resources to support strategy implementation
- Communicating with Committee Co-Chairs about strategy status
- As appropriate, collaborating with other champions to leverage the YHI's collective resources to advance strategies

## YHI Backbone Support

A key structural element within the Collective Impact Model, the YHI Backbone provides back office support to assist with the administrative and facilitation duties of coordinating committee activities and supporting the Steering Committee activities. YHI Backbone staff assist and support the following activities:

- Coordinate meeting times and secure meeting locations
- Create and disseminate materials for meetings including agendas and meeting minutes
- Manage the membership database (listserv) and communicate with the group as a whole
- Assist Committee Co-Chairs in agenda development or other activities
- Help produce reports for submission to the YHI Steering Committee
- Continually review all YHI strategies to identify opportunities for collaboration and connect people working on similar activities



Mural by artist, Herakut, in Wynwood, Miami. "I dreamt I was human. It was a… Nightmare"

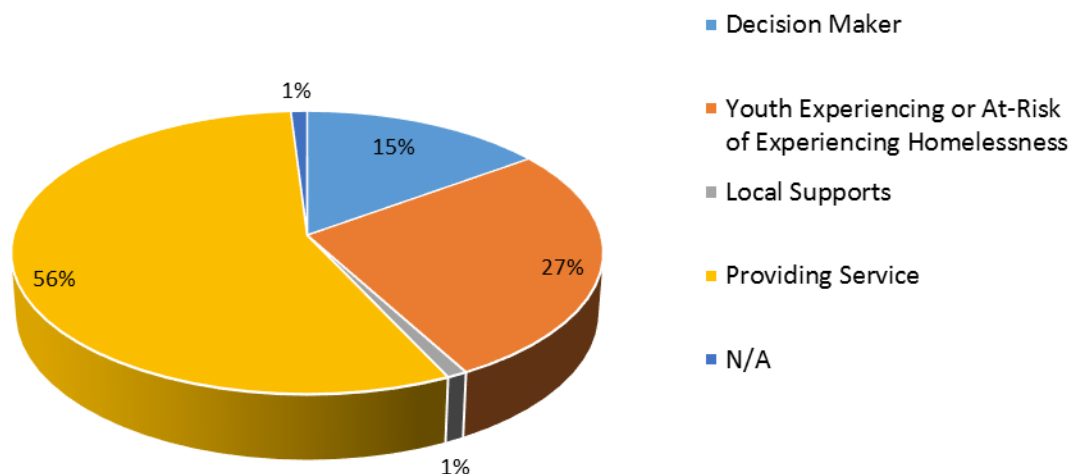# Section II:  Miami-Dade County – Identifying the Challenges and Promise within Local Context

*"Too many youth ages 13 to 24 do not have safe and stable housing in Miami-Dade County."*

In Spring 2015, the Miami-Dade Youth Homelessness Initiative engaged in a System Scan Process to identify the Root Causes of youth homelessness.  Through the System Scan Process, the YHI sought to identify the underlying local factors contributing to homelessness of youth between the ages of 13-24 years old and discern between prejudicial and biased perceptions of youth homelessness, perceptions of youth homelessness of the community-at-large, the professional and personal experiences of those who engage directly with and provide supportive services to youth, and the actual experiences of youth experiencing homelessness.

The System Scan Process required participants to respond to the problem statement "Too many youth ages 13 to 24 do not have safe and stable housing in Miami-Dade County."  Respondents were required to think critically and offer underlying support for their responses, which allowed not only for robust discussion and reflection within survey groups, but also allowed the YHI to collect qualitative data on the causes of youth homelessness as understood by the Miami-Dade community.  System Scans were conducted at the YHI Committee level and were also conducted in the community by YHI members trained in the System Scan process.  The YHI gathered system scan statements from a diverse cross-section of respondents that included the following perspective groups: Decision Makers, Local Supports, Service Providers, and Youth with Lived Experience.  Nearly 1,000 System Scan Statements were collected and recorded, with approximately 30% of responses representing the perspectives of youth with lived experience or who are at-risk of homelessness.

System Scan Statements were analyzed by the Issue-Area Committees and categorized according to emerging themes and patterns.  The resulting categories of statements represented frequently cited causes of youth homelessness and were captured and translated into comprehensive Root Cause statements.  The YHI Steering Committee and the YHI Issue-Area Subcommittees further analyzed these identified Root Causes, and taking into consideration the core outcome areas identified by the USICH, selected Priority Root Causes that would serve to inform the YHI's overarching objectives.  The Priority Root Causes have acted as directives in the development of the various YHI Strategies and community-level projects to prevent and end youth homelessness.

## YHI System Scan Statements by Perspective Group

- Decision Maker
- Youth Experiencing or At-Risk of Experiencing Homelessness
- Local Supports
- Providing Service
- N/A

1%
15%
27%
56%
1%

Additional system scans have been conducted with Youth Experiencing or At-Risk of Experiencing Homelessness during summer 2016.  Those statements are not reflected in this chart.

### SAMPLE SCAN STATEMENTS

| YOUTH VOICE | SERVICE PROVIDERS |
|---|---|
| • "Youth can't get a bus card from school." <br> • "Housing is too expensive in Miami." <br> • "Youth get kicked out because she becomes pregnant." <br> • "Youth identify as LGBT and get kicked out." <br> • "Young people are hungry and self-medicate and develop addictions." <br> • "Death of mother or father." <br> • "Abuse or molestation at home." <br> • "Parents on drugs." | • "Parents don't accept the lifestyle of a young person." <br> • "Obtaining support and access to educational rights often requires some sort of adult advocate, a very vocal parent, to demand support." <br> • "Parents don't know that educational support programs and vocational programs are available." <br> • "Youth have no family to guide them and direct their decision making." <br> • "Young people come from abusive homes." <br> • "Kids might be in DCF custody and then age out and live with friends." <br> • "Engaged in gang-related activity." <br> • "Homeless parents cannot financially support their children." |

## Challenges and Needs

Through the System Scan Process and ongoing community discussions with various stakeholders, the YHI has identified significant needs and challenges facing youth at-risk or experiencing homelessness in Miami-Dade County.  As a community, the Miami-Dade Youth Homelessness Initiative and its partners must consider the following identified root causes of youth homelessness as it develops a comprehensive system-of-care design to address the diverse and unique needs of our youth.

- **LACK OF HEALTHY ADULT RELATIONSHIPS:** There is a need to establish a healthy adult relationship and an even greater need to re-establish these relationships once/if it has been severed. Youth lack a healthy, permanent relationship with an adult and do not have adequate guidance and support needed when experiencing or at risk of experiencing homelessness.
- **IDENTIFICAITON AND TREATMENT OF DISABILITIES:** Youth are not given the individualized attention needed to accurately assess needs related to a potential disability and schools lack protocols (or do not follow established protocols) pertaining to identification and diagnosis of disabilities.
- **BARRIERS TO EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT:** Youth are not adequately exposed to examples of financial and educational success and sometimes drop out of school because it is stressful or there is a need to support the family, but without a diploma or skills the youth experience unemployment. Educational programs too often focus on attainment of a college degree, without acknowledging that skills and trade-based careers may be an option for youth.
- **LACK OF LIFE SKILLS AND CAREER PREPARATION:** Unrealistic expectations are placed upon youth to become independent at a young age.  There is a lack of guidance regarding career preparation and life skills, including budgeting and financial management.
- **CRIMINAL JUSTICE ISSUEs:**  Youth engage in criminal activity to survive or due to influence of their environment and are unable to exit the criminal justice system once they become involved.
- **LGBTQ DISCRIMINATION:**  Due to cultural factors or religious bias, some parents experience major moral or philosophical dilemmas when youth identify as LGBTQ, resulting in familial conflict and youth being kicked out or running away and becoming unstably housed or homeless.
- **SUBSTANCE ABUSE:**  Youth use drugs to self-medicate to escape their harsh realities, and as a result, experience impaired judgment, financial difficulties, and relational issues that lead to housing instability.
- **PARENTING ISSUES:**  Youth experience parental abuse, neglect, or abandonment due to intentional or unintentional behavior and complex dynamics within the family.
- **LACK OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING:** There is a lack of affordable housing available in Miami-Dade County for youth experiencing and at risk of experiencing homeless. The lack of affordable housing available to youth is due in part to lack of funding dedicated to affordable housing targeting youth in Miami-Dade County.  Additional barriers to safe and affordable housing for youth include restrictive leasing policies, qualifications, and requirements (e.g., rental history, employment verification, first/last/deposit)
- **ACCESS TO TRANSPORTATION:**  There is a lack of transportation in areas where shelters and affordable housing are located.
- **JUVENILE JUSTICE/CRIMINAL ACTIVITY:**  Youth engage in drugs, violent behavior, and gang activity due to pressure in the inner city community, glorification of violence in the media, and coercion of youth by local gang members to join gangs upon threat to family.  Youth become reliant on criminal

activity for income due to lack of legitimate employment opportunities and are unable to stay in the home where parents fear association with youth with a criminal record.

- **COMMUNITY APATHY:** There are no cross sector solutions to address youth homelessness in Miami-Dade County, and further, youth are not a priority in addressing homelessness and thus do not have access to supportive services or advocates to assist them in navigating the existing system.

- **FUNDING:** Youth support organizations and service providers are struggling to stay afloat financially and lack funding from the State and County, resulting in downsizing staff and further elimination of services available to youth experiencing or at risk of experiencing homelessness.

- **SEX-TRAFFICKING:** Youth are lured into sex trafficking by promise of money, affection, or a new lifestyle by predatory adults and are often held captive by those who recruit them, and thus made incapable mentally or physically to escape the cycle.

- **ACCURACY & DEARTH OF DATA:** There is a dearth of valid, reliable data on the numbers of youth experiencing homelessness in Miami-Dade County and the number of beds currently available to homeless youth.  Further, there is no shared system or information collaborative to determine the number of homeless youth exiting the child welfare system or juvenile justice system.

- **SEXUAL/PHYSICAL/MENTAL ABUSE:** Domestic violence, substance abuse, and dysfunction in the family household where the youth is a victim of or witness to sexual, physical, and/or mental abuse leads youth to use drugs as an escape, and there are too few facilities or services available to youth to receive adequate care or treatment for substance abuse or trauma.

- **FAMILY DYSFUNCTION:** There is a failure of open communication within families and a lack of programs to support parents and families in Miami-Dade County.  Youth lack a positive, supportive, stable home life and leave the home seeking better economic conditions, love, and stability.

- **IMMIGRATION:** Undocumented youth experience challenges in accessing services and housing, especially when they have moved to the US without their parents or are seeking to secure housing without proper documentation to support a lease application.

- **MENTAL HEALTH & SUBSTANCE ABUSE ISSUES:** Youth are self-medicating in order to contend with stress, violence and lack of hope rather than seeking assistance thus leading to unaddressed substance abuse and mental health issues, which homeless shelters are dealing with.

- **SURVIVAL WORK/CRIMES:** Youth engage in activities such as survival sex and drug sales and depend on illicit activities as a source of income because they feel cannot access legal/legitimate work, in order to escape homelessness and the perceived stigma of homelessness. Youth are unable to receive support because there is no place where youth can talk about their experiences.

- **POOR RESOURCE ALLOCATION AND MARKETING:** Youth are finding it difficult to locate well-funded, helpful resources that are marketed towards them as well as attainable by them.

- **INADEQUACY OF SHELTERS FOR YOUTH:** Youth who identify as homeless are experiencing difficulty finding shelter due to overcrowding and strict policies. Inadequacy of shelters and safety issues within the shelters prolong and exacerbate youth homelessness. LGBTQ youth, in particular, feel unsafe and are unsafe in shelters.

- **LACK OF HEALTHY, PERMANENT ADULT CONNECTIONS:** Youth who identify as homeless often lack the support system and role models that would normally connect them to a brighter future.

- **DEFINITIONS AND POLICIES:** Policies and requirements for youth assistance are too narrowly defined, thus limiting participation in programs by many youth.

- **INSTITUTIONAL RACISM:** Institutionalized racism has perpetuated policies and practices that increase the likelihood of people of color being or becoming homeless.

- **LACK OF YOUTH VOICE/INCLUSION:** Youth with lived experience re not engaged in the process of identifying causes and solutions to youth homelessness.
- **UNADDRESSED CHRONIC ILLNESS:**  Many youth and or families do not have the financial capacity to address chronic illness - mental and/or physical. Chronic illness left untreated stifles youth in coping with homelessness.
- **DISSILLUSIONMENT WITH FOSTER CARE SYSTEM:**  Youth in foster care encounter housing and relationship instability within the system, and as a result, refuse to engage with DCF after 18.
- **SYSTEMIC FAILURE TO ADDRESS MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES:** The overuse of judicial interventions, lack of preventative and transition age youth services, and stringent diagnostic criteria in adult system of care and children's system of care for mental health, substance abuse, and behavioral health services, increases instances of homelessness.
- **INADEQUATE GOVERNMENT FUNDING:** There is inadequate government funding allocated to address youth homelessness in Miami-Dade.

## Resources and Strengths

- **GROWING NETWORK:**  There is a unified and growing collective of youth serving providers, including educational institutions, homeless service providers, legal advocates, and healthcare practitioners that have committed to the goal of preventing and ending youth homelessness by 2020 in Miami-Dade County.
- **PHILANTHROPIC COMMUNITY:** The local funding community has generously supported the Youth Homelessness Initiative in its early planning stages and has shown increasing interest in addressing youth homelessness through funding dedicated to programs that target homeless youth, including YHI programmatic strategies.
- **SUPPORTIVE CoC LEAD AGENCY:** The Miami-Dade County Homeless Trust, the lead agency of the CoC, has assigned staff to support the work of the YHI, with Homeless Trust team members serving on various YHI Issue-Area Committees and contributing to the development of the collaborative strategies.  The Miami-Dade Homeless Trust is currently supporting the ongoing work of the YHI through a U.S. HUD Planning Grant and has recently established a Youth Homelessness Working Group to better link the YHI with the Homeless Trust.
- **DEDICATED BACKBONE ENTITY:** Miami Homes For All serves as the Backbone Entity and will soon employ two full-time staff members dedicated to supporting the activities of the YHI.  Further, two Co-Chairs of the YHI Steering Committee are located at Miami Homes For All and communicate daily with the third Co-Chair at MDCPS Project UP-START to drive the work forward.  The Backbone Entity has been successful in guiding the vision and strategy of the YHI, supporting aligned activities, facilitating communication and data sharing, building public will, and mobilizing funding to support the goal of creating a comprehensive system-of-care to prevent and end youth homelessness.
- **INCREASING AWARENESS:** There is an increased community awareness of the prevalence of youth homelessness as evidenced by recent traditional media coverage on local youth overcoming homelessness.
- **SHELTER/HOUSING:** Lotus House currently provides shelter and comprehensive services to homeless young women and youth and is slated to expand its shelter and services in 2017.  Camillus House has created new shelter opportunities for youth in crisis through its 24 youth shelter beds.   Additional resources include the Host Home Program of The Alliance for GLBTQ Youth and Pridelines, the

emergency shelter services provided for minor youth in crisis at Miami Bridge Youth and Family Services, and the newly relocated drop-in center at Pridelines.

- **MDCPS Project UP-START:** Project UP-START is the Homeless Education Program of Miami-Dade County Public Schools.  Project UP-START staff supports students living in homeless shelters, transitional housing, in public places, in motels, or in the homes of another person out of financial necessity (i.e., "doubled-up").  Project UP-START adheres to the Department of Education's McKinney Vento law by assisting families with school enrollment, transportation requests, accessing free lunch, and case management/referrals to community partners.

  Above and beyond these federal mandates which are covered through federal grants, Project UP-START provides assistance to homeless students that otherwise would not be offered, all for free, such as school supplies, food, new clothing, shoes, toiletries and more.  These services are made available through our unique "UP-START Shop" and is utilized at all times of the school year for students to visit and especially during back-to-school, the holidays, and even for prom season. Project UP-START helps students both inside and outside the classroom with partnerships around the community with higher education institutions, the local Continuum of Care, Homeless Outreach teams, shelters, donors and so many others with the primary goal of improving educational opportunities for homeless youth.  Project UP-START's involvement and leadership role in the YHI demonstrates the commitment by the entire School District to better the lives of unaccompanied homeless youth. The success of any community's efforts to prevent and intervene with youth experiencing homelessness must include involvement from the local public school.

- **HIGHER EDUCATION COLLABORATION:** The efforts between Miami-Dade County Public Schools, Miami-Dade College, and Florida International University have been instrumental in assisting many homeless youth transition into higher education and overall improving their educational opportunities.  This collaboration in particular is unique to the Miami-Dade community as compared to other communities in Florida and now serves as an example of how the local public school district, the local college, and the local university have removed barriers at the institutional level and individual level to allow more homeless youth to apply and transition to higher education.

# Section III:  Overview of YHI

## Strategies

The Miami-Dade Youth Homelessness Initiative has identified and prioritized the most pressing root causes of youth homelessness through the community survey process described in Section II.  During the first two quarters of 2016, the YHI Steering Committee and Issue-Area Committees developed the following strategies, or community-level projects, which will be the foundation of Miami-Dade's system-of-care design to prevent and end youth homelessness.  The Strategies and Key Action steps are outlined in detail in Appendix A.

### Data and Research

1. Collect accurate data on the number of families with children 13-17 AND youth 18-24 who are housing insecure
2. Improve data collection strategies and systems for sharing across the YHI
3. Collect accurate data on the current state of emergency and transitional housing for families with children 13-17 and youth 18-24
4. Map the YHI Network

### Education and Employment

1. Development of dorm-style housing for unaccompanied homeless youth enrolled in college or vocational programs
2. Develop Adult Education/Job Readiness Resource Chart (short form/brochure)
3. Create Universal Homeless Verification Form (and Procedures) for Higher Education
4. Leverage existing resources to support youth at risk of, or experiencing homelessness to develop career goals and skills and access employment opportunities

### Funding

1. Develop the grant cycle calendar of funders at the local, state, and national levels
2. Create a resource list of all of the funders currently working in our sector by surveying all of our agencies
3. Engage funders to garner their support of YHI (including survey of interest, planning a convening of funders, development of Funders Tool Kit
4. Source current grant notifications and work with relevant YHI committee(s) on submitting collaborative grant applications
5. Support the development of appropriate marketing materials about YHI to foundations and government funders

### Permanent Connections

1. Establish youth seat on the Homeless Trust Board
2. Establish a meaningful working partnership with open and consistent communication between Our Kids, The Miami Bridge, GLBTQ Alliance, and other YHI partners serving youth in foster care and at-risk of becoming homeless
3. Pilot a youth-centered program to connect youth experiencing homelessness or at-risk of experiencing homelessness to a Permanent Connection in the community
4. Establish mentoring collaborative in Miami-Dade County, or revive existing collaborative
5. Establish a reunification unit in juvenile facilities

6. Collaborate with local faith-based community to identify, support, and refer at-risk and homeless youth

### Public Relations/Outreach

1. Marketing and outreach to local Miami-Dade County shelters to build awareness of the experiences/needs of unaccompanied homeless youth and services offered through YHI partners
2. Awareness/Outreach to youth clients of local agencies and YHI partners
3. Support the development of appropriate marketing materials about YHI to foundations and government funders
4. Expand the number of hospitals and clinics with information and awareness necessary to appropriately serve homeless youth
5. Develop youth-driven awareness and outreach organization/club at MDCPS High Schools (may be housed in existing student org)

### Stable Housing

1. Advocate for additional funding for shelter beds for unaccompanied homeless youth, targeting three types of funding sources: 1) Government Funding Entities, 2) Public/Private Foundations, and 3) Providers/Agencies
2. Expand access to housing for youth currently/formerly involved with juvenile justice system
3. Increase number of emergency shelter beds for 18-24 year olds in Miami-Dade County.
4. Increase number of transitional housing options for youth in Miami-Dade County.
5. Establish housing location and stabilization services for youth moving to market-rate apartments (e.g., assistance finding an apartment with willing landlord; roommate matching)
6. Advocate for/Create time-limited rental subsidies (e.g., gradually stepped-down rental subsidy for youth in scattered site, market-rate apartments (up to 18 months) with safety net available to young people when more support is needed)
7. Partnership with public housing authority to prioritize youth with high barriers to housing.  Allow for identification and referral of youth who meet eligibility criteria (e.g., aged out and 18-21) and are currently in homeless shelters and/or housing vulnerable

### Well-Being

1. Establish safety guidelines for housing unaccompanied homeless youth (inclusive of foster homes, shelters, host homes, residential treatment facilities, and religious institutions)
2. Develop mobile health unit that includes mental health component
3. Provide primary and behavioral health care to youth exiting juvenile justice system
4. Primary and behavioral health care providers will adopt evidence based practices to identify, assess, and treat at-risk and homeless youth
5. Identify and eliminate barriers for at-risk or homeless youth to access primary or behavioral health care
6. Expand the number of hospitals and clinics with information and awareness necessary to appropriately serve homeless youth

### Youth

1. Develop youth-driven awareness and outreach organization/club at MDCPS High Schools (may be housed in existing student org)

## Defining the YHI Approach to Preventing and Ending Youth Homelessness

The Miami-Dade Youth Homelessness Initiative is working towards designing a system of interventions that will prevent youth from becoming homeless. In the event that a youth does experience homelessness, the system design will include housing and service interventions to ensure the period of homelessness is a brief and one-time occurrence for that youth. The YHI will consider the following approaches in its development of a crisis response system. The YHI Steering Committee will formally adopt approved intervention models and approaches by vote in Fall 2016:

- Positive Youth Development
- Trauma-Informed Care
- Client-Centered Care
- Cultural Competence
- Rapid re-housing
- Low Barrier Housing
- Human Rights Approach

## Outputs and Deliverables

In the upcoming ten-month period, the Miami-Dade Youth Homelessness Initiative will make progress towards completing the Strategies listed above in Section III and defined in Appendix A. The Youth Homelessness Initiative will coordinate the 2017 iCount – our community's youth point-in-time count in January 2017. The community collaborative will also develop a comprehensive and up-to-date resource directory for youth experiencing homelessness that will be available online and accessible at locations that youth frequently visit. Additionally, the Youth Homelessness Initiative will develop and implement trainings on youth homelessness to be conducted with network providers and community partners serving this vulnerable population and produce a curriculum on youth homelessness that will be accredited and qualify for continuing education credits in respective professional fields. The YHI will produce recommended standard Safety Guidelines for housing unaccompanied homeless youth. Further, the YHI will produce a Network Map of youth service providers in Miami-Dade County.

In the Summer 2017, the YHI will produce an updated version of this strategic plan and produce a Comprehensive Plan to End Youth Homelessness to the Continuum of Care. The Comprehensive Plan will include concrete strategies to achieve system-level integration; a proposal for Coordinated Service Delivery that includes clearly defined program types, with specific eligibility criteria, target groups and performance measures; a proposed mechanism to expediently determine eligibility for services and quickly refer a youth appropriately; and a system to maintain an unduplicated real-time list of all youth experiencing homelessness; recommendations for a process to asses youth homelessness trends including: inflow, housing placement, client characteristics, and needs and impacts interventions.

## ABLe Change Framework – Evaluation and Modification

Further detailed in Appendix B: Performance Measures and Collective Database
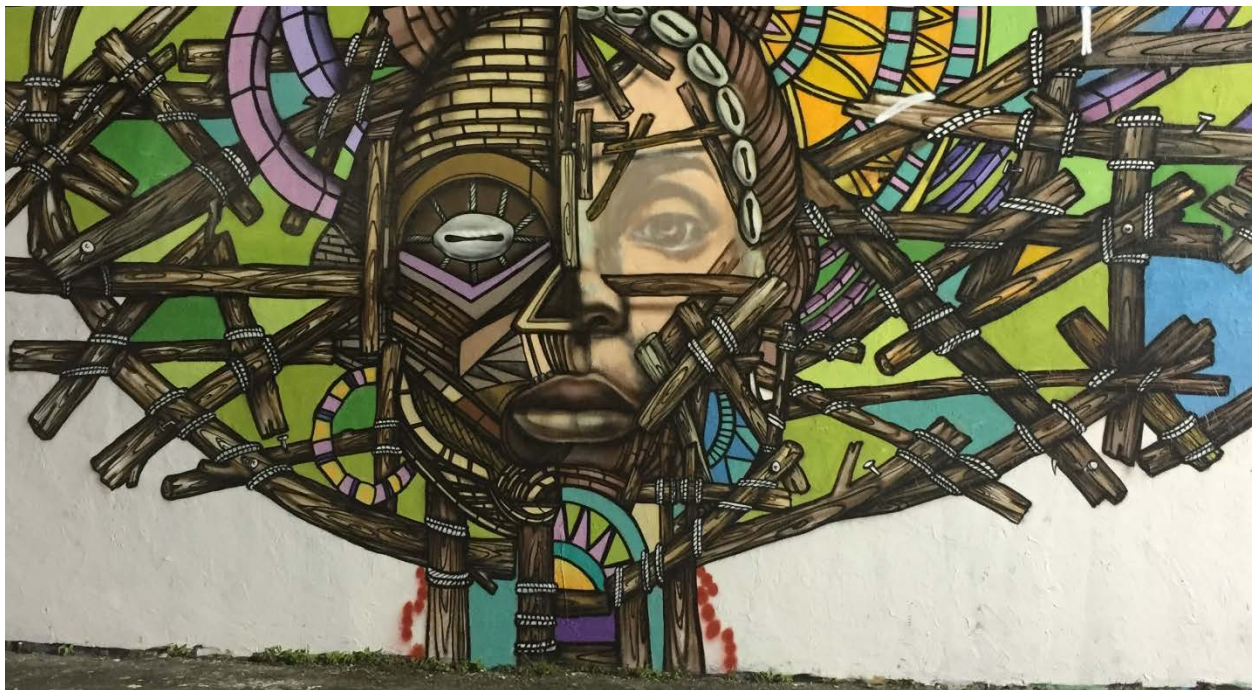


Mural by David Sepulveda aka Rimx (The Bushwick Collective x Mana Urban Arts Project at Wynwood's RC Cola Factory)

## Section IV: Conclusion

The Miami-Dade Youth Homelessness Initiative is working with The Miami-Dade County Homeless Trust, the lead agency of our community's Continuum of Care, to finalize the building of a countywide system-of-care tailored to youth experiencing homelessness.  In the coming months, a Homeless Trust appointed strategic working group of key subject-matter experts, many of whom are already engaged in the YHI, will begin convening to increase support of the Youth Homelessness Initiative, turn strategies into action, and develop benchmarks and outcomes.

As we progress forward in 2016, the YHI will work to develop recommendations, policies, and procedures to implement a unified, collaborative response to youth homelessness that aligns with USICH recommendations and that will include the following components: prevention, identification, and early intervention; coordinated entry and assessment; low-barrier emergency and crisis services for youth; and housing solutions and services that are tailored and age appropriate to positively impact core outcomes for youth experiencing homelessness.

The Miami-Dade County community has embraced the mission and vision of the YHI and has committed substantial time and resources to developing a comprehensive system-of-care design to prevent and end youth homelessness.  This plan represents the collaborative efforts of an impressive, dedicated cross-section of service providers, government agencies, educators, health care providers, advocates, and other professionals and community members who recognize the urgency of addressing the needs of youth experiencing homelessness and who seek to protect and uplift this incredibly vulnerable population of young people in our community.  While this plan outlines our collaborative's current strategies, many of which are progressing to the implementation phase, it should be viewed as a foundational document and considered the first iteration of the Miami-Dade Youth Homelessness Initiative's strategic plan to prevent and end homelessness by 2020.

## Resources

Administration for Children, Youth and Families
http://www.acf.hhs.gov/acyf

American Bar Association –Commission on Homelessness and Poverty
http://www.americanbar.org/groups/public_services/homelessness_poverty.html

A Way Home America
http://awayhomeamerica.org/

A Way Home Canada
http://awayhome.ca/

Coalition for Juvenile Justice
http://www.juvjustice.org/

Corporation for Supportive Housing
http://www.csh.org/

Covenant House International
https://www.covenanthouse.org/

Florida Council on Homelessness
http://www.dcf.state.fl.us/programs/homelessness/council/

Funders Together to End Homelessness
http://www.funderstogether.org/

National Network for Youth
https://www.nn4youth.org/

National Alliance to End Homelessness
http://www.endhomelessness.org/

National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth
http://www.naehcy.org/

National Healthcare for the Homeless Council
https://www.nhchc.org/resources/clinical/tools-and-support/children-youth/

National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty
https://www.nlchp.org/youth

True Colors Fund
https://truecolorsfund.org/

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
https://www.hudexchange.info/homelessness-assistance/resources-for-homeless-youth/

U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness
https://www.usich.gov/

## Recommended Reading/Research References

Atwell, M., Bridgeland J., Ingram, E., Reed, B., *Hidden in Plain Sight: Homeless Students in America's Public Schools* (2016).

Turner, Alina.  *A Way Home: Youth Community Planning Toolkit*. (2016). A Way Home Canada

*Administration for Children and Families Family and Youth Services Bureau Street Outreach Program – Data Collection Study Final Report* (April 2016).  Administration For Children and Families.

*All Home: Strategic Plan 2015-2019 – King County, WA.* (2015). All Home.

*Florida Council on Homelessness – 2016 Annual Report* (2016).  Florida Council on Homelessness, Department of Children and Families.

*Framework to End Youth Homelessness: A Resource Text for Dialogue and Action (February 2013).* U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness

*Heading Home: Minnesota's Plan to Prevent and End Youth Homelessness – 2016-2017* (January 2016). Minnesota Interagency Council on Homelessness.

*NEST: Collaborative to Prevent LGBTQ Youth Homelessness* (December 2014).  Harris County, Texas: Montrose Center – NEST Collaborative.

*Opening Doors, Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness* (Amended 2012). U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness

*Proposed System to End and Youth and Young Adult Homelessness* (2016).  National Network For Youth.

*Youth Rights! Right Now! Ending Youth Homelessness: A Human Rights Guide* (2016).  A Way Home Canada.

# Appendix A: Key Action Plan

The Miami-Dade Youth Homelessness Initiative has identified and prioritized the most pressing root causes of youth homelessness through the community survey process described in Section II of the YHI Strategic Plan.  During the first two quarters of 2016, the YHI Steering Committee and Issue-Area Committees developed multiple strategies, or community-level projects, that aim to address the identified root causes and target the core outcome areas identified in the USICH Framework to End Youth Homelessness.  These Strategies will serve as the foundation of Miami-Dade's system-of-care design to prevent and end youth homelessness.

The Strategies and Key Action steps are outlined in the table below.  The YHI Steering Committee and Issue- Area Committees will meet in early Quarter 4 of 2016 to define outcomes and measures, confirm timelines, assign Strategy Champions, and make any necessary modifications.

| YHI Issue-Area: Education and Employment. Education and Employment includes high performance in and completion of educational and training activities, especially for younger youth, and starting and maintaining adequate and stable employment for older youth. | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Strategy 1:**  Develop dorm-style housing for unaccompanied homeless youth enrolled in college or vocational programs. | | | |
| USICH Outcome:  Education and Employment | | | |
| Key Activities: | Quarter | Year | Committee |
| Partner with housing agency (Camillus House) and identify building for pilot program | Q1 | 2016 | Education/Employment |
| Research college/university residence-hall policies and practices to develop program model for pilot | Q1 | 2016 | Education/Employment |
| Confer with local agencies that provide housing for former foster youth (e.g., Casa Valentina) to obtain guidance on policies, referral procedures, and programming. Adopt best-practices and formalize residence hall-style housing policies and intake process. | Q1 | 2016 | Education/Employment |
| Identify potential students for pilot program via YHI network referral | Q2 | 2016 | Education/Employment |
| Conduct feedback sessions with youth residents | Q3, Q4 | 2016 | Education/Employment |
| Develop policies to transition youth from Camillus House emergency shelter to Residence Hall style-housing | Q3 | 2016 | Education/Employment |
| Establish comprehensive support services for youth residents; secure partnerships with supportive services agencies and formalize programmatic role of partnering agencies | Q1 | 2017 | Education/Employment |
| Ongoing Development and Expansion of Residence Hall property and programming | Q3 | 2017 | Education/Employment |

| **Strategy 2:** Develop Adult Education/Job Readiness Resource Chart (short form/brochure). | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| USICH Outcome: Education and Employment | | | |
| Key Activities: | Quarter | Year | Committee |
| Survey Education/Employment partners | Q3 | 2016 | Education/Employment |
| Survey YHI Network and develop network map including educational and career resources | Q4 | 2016 | Data and Research |
| Publish youth-focused resource guide with educational and career resources (Career Source) | Q4 | 2016 | Education/Employment |
| Develop on-line resource guide for youth, including (but not limited to) education and career resources | Q1 | 2017 | PR/Outreach Education/Employment |
| **Strategy 3:** Create Universal Homeless Verification Form and Procedures for Higher Education. | | | |
| USICH Outcome: Education and Employment | | | |
| Key Activities | Quarter | Year | Committee |
| Draft Homeless Verification Form to be utilized and accepted by FIU and MDC | Q2 | 2016 | Education/Employment |
| Obtain FIU and MDC institutional approval of Draft Homeless Verification Form | Q2 | 2016 | Education/Employment |
| Obtain agreement with Miami Homeless Outreach Team to adopt Universal Homeless Verification Form for Higher Education | Q3 | 2016 | Education/Employment |
| **Strategy 4:** Leverage existing resources to support youth at risk of, or experiencing homelessness to develop career goals and skills and access employment opportunities. | | | |
| USICH Outcome: Education and Employment | | | |
| Key Activities: | Quarter | Year | Committee |
| Identify key programs in Miami-Dade offering career-development training and access to internship and employment opportunities | Q4 | 2016 | Education/Employment Data and Research |
| Identify the gaps in employment-support services and work-place skills training | Q4 | 2016 | Education/Employment |
| Develop internship and employment pilot program with private employers and YHI network partners | Q3 | 2017 | Education/Employment |

| **YHI Issue-Area: Permanent Connections.** Permanent Connections include healthy ongoing attachments to mentors, family, schools, positive social networks, and caring adults. | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Strategy 1:** Establish youth seat on the Homeless Trust Board. | | | |
| USICH Outcome: Permanent Connections | | | |
| Major Activities: | Quarter | Year | Committee |
| Review the Homeless Trust By-Laws to determine feasibility of establishing Youth seat on Board | Q2 | 2016 | Permanent Connections |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Identify potential organization through which youth could be named to the HT Board | Q3 | 2016 | Permanent Connections |
| Identify youth with lived experience to nominate to the HT Board | Q4 | 2016 | Permanent Connections |
| **Strategy 2:** Establish a meaningful working partnership with open and consistent communication between Our Kids, The Miami Bridge, GLBTQ Alliance, and other YHI partners serving youth in foster care and at-risk of becoming homeless. | | | |
| USICH Outcome: Permanent Connections | | | |
| Key Activities: | Quarter | Year | Committee |
| Engage Our Kids and Department of Children and Families on CoC Youth Homelessness Work Group | Q3 | 2016 | Steering Committee |
| Meet with Child Welfare agencies to establish working partnerships and communication structure with Youth Homelessness Initiative partners | Q4 | 2016 | Permanent Connections |
| Meet with YHI partners serving youth in foster care to understand any gaps that exist between child welfare agencies | Q4 | 2016 | Permanent Connections |
| Establish memorandums of understanding between child welfare agencies and YHI partners to improve communication, information sharing, and service provision to youth in foster care that are currently served through YHI partnering agencies | Q1 | 2017 | Permanent Connections/Steering Committee |
| **Strategy 3:** Pilot a youth-centered program to connect youth experiencing homelessness or at-risk of experiencing homelessness to a Permanent Connection in the community. | | | |
| USICH Outcome: Permanent Connections | | | |
| Key Activities: | Quarter | Year | Committee |
| Research national models and best-practices for identifying appropriate placements and permanent adult supports for foster youth and youth experiencing homelessness | Q3 | 2016 | Permanent Connections |
| Develop proposal for pilot program to connect youth experiencing homelessness with a healthy, permanent connection to an adult in the youth's network | Q3 | 2016 | Permanent Connections |
| Develop budget and identify sources of potential funding for pilot program | Q3 | 2016 | Permanent Connections |
| Establish memorandum of understanding with potential partnering agencies that will serve as referral agencies in the pilot | Q4 | 2016 | Permanent Connections |
| Develop the framework and underlying procedures for the pilot; obtain technical assistance from national partners | Q4 | 2016 | Permanent Connections |
| Launch Pilot program to connect youth experiencing homelessness with a safe, permanent connection to a healthy adult in the community | Q1 | 2017 | Permanent Connections |
| **Strategy 4:** Establish mentoring collaborative in Miami-Dade County, or revive existing collaborative. | | | |

| USICH Outcome:  Permanent Connections | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Key Activities: | Quarter | Year | Committee |
| Hold meeting with Educate Tomorrow for peer-learning session on mentoring former foster youth and youth experiencing homelessness | Q4 | 2016 | Permanent Connections |
| Identify and connect with all mentoring agencies in Miami-Dade serving youth within the target age-group of YHI | Q4 | 2016 | Permanent Connections |
| Host convening of Miami-Dade mentoring programs and establish on-going communication through quarterly meetings | Q1 | 2017 | Permanent Connections |
| Include up-to-date listing of mentoring programs in the YHI on-line resource for youth and youth providers | Q2 | 2017 | Permanent Connections; PR/Outreach |
| **Strategy 5:**  Establish a reunification unit in juvenile facilities | | | |
| USICH Outcome:  Permanent Connections | | | |
| Key Activities: | Quarter | Year | Committee |
| Meet with Department of Juvenile Justice officials for learning session on current reunification processes in place | Q4 | 2016 | Permanent Connections; Steering Committee |
| Additional Action Steps to be determined following session with Department of Juvenile Justice | Q4 | 2016 | Permanent Connections |
| **Strategy 6:**  Collaborate with local faith-based community to identify, support, and refer at-risk and homeless youth | | | |
| USICH Outcome:  Permanent Connections | | | |
| Key Activities: | Quarter | Year | Committee |
| Invite local faith-based community to become members of the YHI, specifically on Permanent Connections and PR/Outreach Committees | Q4 | 2016 | PR/Outreach Permanent Connections |
| Engage with Miami-PACT (People Acting for Community Together) to develop awareness amongst PACT member congregations on the issue of youth homelessness and to connect to PACT priority issues of Affordable Housing and Juvenile Justice | Q4 | 2016 | PR/Outreach Permanent Connections |
| Provide local faith-based community with resource guide and information to be effective advocates for youth experiencing homelessness and make expedient referrals to youth providers | Q1 | 2016 | PR/Outreach Permanent Connections |
| Conduct trainings with faith-based community leaders and congregation | Q1 | 2016 | PR/Outreach Permanent Connections |

**YHI Issue-Area: Stable Housing.** Stable Housing includes a safe, stable, reliable, and developmentally appropriate place to call home with access to supportive services as necessary.

**Strategy 1:** Advocate for additional funding for shelter beds for unaccompanied homeless youth, targeting three types of funding sources: 1) Government Funding Entities, 2) Public/Private Foundations, and 3) Providers/Agencies.

USICH Outcome: Stable Housing

| Key Activities: | Quarter | Year | Committee |
|---|---|---|---|
| Attend meetings of the Miami-Dade County Homeless Trust – Housing Development Committee (Ongoing) | Q4 Ongoing | 2016 Ongoing | Stable Housing |
| Establish Youth Homelessness as standing agenda item at Homeless Trust Executive Board meetings | Q4 | 2016 | Stable Housing |
| Obtain list of local, state, and national funders that fund youth homelessness programs; develop funding strategy for youth housing in coordination with Funding Committee | Q4 | 2016 | Stable Housing Funding |
| Attend Housing and Services Coalition meetings | Q4 Ongoing | 2016 Ongoing | Stable Housing |

**Strategy 2:** Expand access to housing for youth currently/formerly involved with juvenile justice system.

USICH Outcome: Stable Housing

| Major Activities | Quarter | Year | Committee |
|---|---|---|---|
| Develop partnership with Juvenile Services Department and hold initial introductory meeting (re: release procedures, follow-up procedures, and data share) | Q4 | 2016 | Stable Housing (WB, DR, PC) |
| Analyze existing housing program models for youth exiting the juvenile justice system | Q4 | 2016 | Stable Housing |
| Collect data on the intersections of youth experiencing homelessness and youth involved in juvenile justice system | Q4 | 2016 | Data & Research |
| Develop policy guidelines to be adopted by youth housing providers to ensure juvenile justice-involved youth are not restricted from participating in programs | Q1 | 2017 | Stable Housing |
| Produce recommendations report of best practices and effective housing models for juvenile justice involved youth, to be shared with shelters/providers, including programmatic details and funding sources | Q1 | 2017 | Stable Housing |

**Strategy 3:** Increase number of emergency shelter beds for 18-24 year olds in Miami-Dade County.

USICH Outcome: Stable Housing

| Major Activities | Quarter | Year | Committee |
|---|---|---|---|
| Conduct inventory of current youth emergency shelter beds | Q4 | 2016 | Data & Research |
| Collect, analyze and share data to broaden understanding of the scope of housing instability of youth | Q4 | 2016 | Data & Research |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Analyze existing program models for youth emergency shelter and determine applicability in Miami-Dade County | Q1 | 2017 | Stable Housing |
| Produce recommendations report of best practices and effective emergency shelter models to be shared with shelters/providers, including programmatic details and funding sources | Q1 | 2017 | Stable Housing |
| Collect data on youth bed occupancy, including client demographics, frequency of turnover, etc. (QUARTERLY) | Ongoing | Ongoing | Data & Research |
| Meet with youth emergency shelter providers to offer technical support,  provide mechanism for sharing policies/procedures, and encourage collaboration across the system  (QUARTERLY) | Ongoing | Ongoing | Stable Housing |
| Identify funding opportunities to support an increase in youth emergency shelter; encourage/facilitate collaborative funding applications with housing and supportive services providers | Q1; Ongoing | 2017; Ongoing | Funding |
| Assist in coordination of homeless youth providers in preparing for 2017 HUD CoC Program Competition | Q2 | 2017 | Stable Housing; Funding |
| **Strategy 4:**  Increase supportive housing options for unaccompanied homeless youth between the ages of 18-24 in Miami-Dade County. | | | |
| USICH Outcome:  Stable Housing | | | |
| Key Activities: | Quarter | Year | Committee |
| Analyze existing program models for youth supportive housing and determine applicability in Miami-Dade County | Q4 | 2016 | Stable Housing |
| Produce recommendations report of best practices and effective supportive housing models for youth to be shared with shelters/providers, including programmatic details and funding sources | Q1 | 2017 | Stable Housing |
| Identify funding opportunities to support an increase in supportive housing options for youth; encourage/facilitate collaborative funding applications with housing and supportive services providers | Q1 | 2017 | Stable Housing; Funding |
| Meet with youth supportive housing providers to offer technical support,  provide mechanism for sharing policies/procedures, and encourage collaboration across the system  (QUARTERLY) | Q2 | 2017 | Stable Housing |
| Assist in coordination of homeless youth providers in preparing for 2017 HUD CoC Program Competition | Q2 | 2017 | Stable Housing; Funding |
| **Strategy 5:**  Establish housing location and stabilization services for youth moving to market-rate apartments (e.g., assistance finding an apartment with willing landlord; roommate matching). | | | |
| USICH Outcome: Stable Housing | | | |
| Key Activities: | Quarter | Year | Committee |
| Newly Identified Strategy: Action Steps to be developed in September/October 2016 | Q4 | 2016 | Stable Housing |
| **Strategy 6:** Advocate for/Create time-limited rental subsidies (e.g., gradually stepped-down rental subsidy for youth in scattered site, market-rate apartments (up to 18 months) with safety net available to young people when more support is needed). | | | |

| USICH Outcome:  Stable Housing | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Key Activities: | Quarter | Year | Committee |
| Newly Identified Strategy: Action Steps to be developed in September/October 2016 | Q4 | 2016 | Stable Housing |
| **Strategy 7:** Partnership with public housing authority to prioritize youth with high barriers to housing.  Allow for identification and referral of youth who meet eligibility criteria (e.g., aged out and 18-21) and are currently in homeless shelters and/or housing vulnerable. | | | |
| USICH Outcome:  Stable Housing | | | |
| Key Activities: | Quarter | Year | Committee |
| Newly Identified Strategy: Action Steps to be developed in September/October 2016 | Q4 | 2016 | Stable Housing |

| **YHI Issue-Area: Well-Being.** Well-Being includes physical health and social/emotional well-being; the development of key competencies, attitudes, and behaviors that equip a young person to succeed across multiple domains of daily life, including school, relationships, and community; the ability to maintain positive relationships with others, solve problems, experience empathy, and manage emotions. | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Strategy 1:**  Establish safety guidelines for housing unaccompanied homeless youth (inclusive of foster homes, shelters, host homes, residential treatment facilities, and religious institutions). | | | |
| USICH Outcome:  Well-Being | | | |
| Key Activities: | Quarter | Year | Committee |
| Obtain copy of Pride curriculum to develop knowledge of standard of practice for foster parents | Q3 | 2016 | Well-Being |
| Meet with various YHI partners that provide housing/shelter to homeless youth and request copy of safety guidelines related to housing youth | Q4 | 2016 | Well-Being |
| Connect with The Avenues Host Home Program in Minneapolis to obtain guidance and safety guidelines for host homes for homeless youth | Q4 | 2016 | Well-Being |
| Review all local guidelines provided by housing providers serving homeless youth; identify themes and draft proposed system-wide guidelines | Q1 | 2017 | Well-Being |
| Introduce proposed guidelines to providers | Q1 | 2017 | Well-Being |
| Review feedback from providers and make revisions as necessary | Q2 | 2017 | Well-Being |
| Conduct trainings on the use and implementation of guidelines | Q2 | 2017 | Well-Being |
| **Strategy 2:**  Develop mobile health unit that includes mental health component. | | | |
| USICH Outcome: Well-Being | | | |
| Key Activities: | Quarter | Year | Committee |
| Establish partnership with UM Pediatric Mobile Health Unit and the Jackson Holtz residents | Q2 | 2016 | Well-Being |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Develop comprehensive plan to ensure that mobile health unit services available to youth experiencing homelessness are comprehensive and include mental health at forefront | Q4 | 2016 | Well-Being |
| Research providers of SBIRT model and introduce into mobile health unit program model | Q4 | 2016 | Well-Being |
| Identify locations of greatest need in Miami-Dade, see South Florida Behavioral Health report on service needs by area | Q4 | 2016 | Well-Being |
| **Strategy 3:** Provide primary and behavioral health care to youth exiting juvenile justice system. | | | |
| USICH Outcome: Well-Being | | | |
| Key Activities: | Quarter | Year | Committee |
| Meet with Department of Juvenile Justice officials for learning session on current health care services provided to youth in custody and upon release from juvenile detention facilities | Q4 | 2016 | Well-Being Steering Committee |
| Additional Action Steps to be determined following session with Department of Juvenile Justice | Q4 | 2016 | Well-Being |
| **Strategy 4:** Primary and behavioral health care providers will adopt evidence based practices to identify, assess, and treat at-risk and homeless youth. | | | |
| USICH Outcome: Well-Being | | | |
| Key Activities: | Quarter | Year | Committee |
| Newly Identified Strategy: Action Steps to be developed in September/October 2016 | Q4 | 2016 | Well-Being |
| **Strategy 5:** Identify and eliminate barriers for at-risk or homeless youth to access primary or behavioral health care. | | | |
| USICH Outcome: Well-Being | | | |
| Key Activities: | Quarter | Year | Committee |
| Newly Identified Strategy: Action Steps to be developed in September/October 2016 | Q4 | 2016 | Well-Being |
| **Strategy 6:** Expand the number of hospitals and clinics with information and awareness necessary to appropriately serve homeless youth. | | | |
| USICH Outcome: Well-Being | | | |
| Key Activities: | Quarter | Year | Committee |
| Newly Identified Strategy: Action Steps to be developed in September/October 2016 | Q4 | 2016 | Well-Being |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **YHI Issue-Area: Data and Research.** Collects currently available data and information regarding youth experiencing homelessness in Miami-Dade to better define the issue and assess the prevalence of youth homelessness. Lead Committee responsible for the design, implementation, and analysis of new local data collection efforts. | | | |
| **Strategy 1:** Collect accurate data on the number of families with children 13-17 AND youth 18-24 who are housing insecure. | | | |
| USICH Outcome: Cross-Cutting Outcome. | | | |
| Key Activities: | Quarter | Year | Committee |

| | Quarter | Year | Committee |
|---|---|---|---|
| Identify number of families with children 13-17 y/o and youth 18-24 y/o on the waitlist for public housing | Q1 | 2017 | Data & Research |
| Identify percentage of households with children 13-17 y/o and youth 18-24 y/o with incomes below 40 percent of the national median household income spending more than 40% of their income on housing | Q1 | 2017 | Data & Research |
| Identify percentage of families with children 13-17 y/o and youth 18-24 y/o who have been evicted or foreclosed on. | Q1 | 2017 | Data & Research |
| Create summary report | Q1 | 2017 | Data & Research |
| **Strategy 2:** Collect accurate data on the current state of emergency and transitional housing for families with children 13-17 and youth 18-24. | | | |
| USICH Outcome: Cross-Cutting Outcome. | | | |
| Key Activities: | Quarter | Year | Committee |
| Gather data on number of transitional housing programs/facilities in Miami-Dade | Q3 | 2016 | Data & Research |
| Gather data on number of emergency housing programs/facilities | Q3 | 2016 | Data & Research |
| Gather data on emergency housing beds (funded and unfunded) | Q3 | 2016 | Data & Research |
| Current number of permanent supportive housing beds/units | Q3 | 2016 | Data & Research |
| Create summary report | Q4 | 2016 | Data & Research |
| **Strategy 3:** Improve data collection strategies and systems for sharing across the YHI. | | | |
| USICH Outcome: Cross-Cutting Outcome. | | | |
| Key Activities: | Quarter | Year | Committee |
| Determine what data is currently being collected and in what system/format | Q4 | 2016 | Data & Research |
| Create data map | Q4 | 2016 | Data & Research |
| Identify areas where modifications to data collection can improve understanding or inform action | Q1 | 2017 | Data & Research |
| Identify new information needs and data to be collected | Q1 | 2017 | Data & Research |
| Examine possibilities for data sharing and collective reporting | Q2 | 2017 | Data & Research |
| **Strategy 4:** Map the Youth Homelessness Initiative Network. | | | |
| USICH Outcome: Cross-Cutting Outcome. | | | |
| Key Activities: | Quarter | Year | Committee |
| Obtain list of all organizations working in the area of youth housing and homelessness prevention (including primary point of contact, email, and phone) | Q3 | 2016 | Data & Research |
| Develop Social Network Analysis data collection strategy, procedures, and timeline. Develop IRB. | Q3 | 2016 | Data & Research |
| Communicate with YHI network about the purpose and process, invite participation. | Q3 | 2016 | Data & Research |
| Schedule interviews (phone or in person) and assign researchers OR launch survey and distribute | Q4 | 2016 | Data & Research |
| Complete data collection | Q4 | 2016 | Data & Research |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Draft analysis | Q4 | 2016 | Data & Research |

**YHI Issue-Area: Funding.** Works towards alignment of the local philanthropic and government funding communities to complement YHI programmatic strategies and ensure effective coordination of resources resulting in increased and scalable impact. Reviews grant proposals written by Issue-Area Committees.

**Strategy 1:** Develop the grant cycle calendar of funders at the local, state, and national levels.

USICH Outcome: Cross-Cutting Outcome.

| Key Activities: | Quarter | Year | Committee |
|---|---|---|---|
| Prepare first draft of grant cycle calendar including local, state, and national funders | Q2 | 2016 | Funding |
| Meet with Steering Committee to discuss and develop funding non-compete policy | Q4 | 2016 | Funding |
| Ensure foundation list included in grant calendar is complete; prioritize additional research | Q4 | 2016 | Funding |
| Finalize and Distribute grant calendar to YHI partnering organizations | Q1 | 2016 | Funding |

**Strategy 2:** Create a resource list of all of the funders currently working in our sector by surveying all of our agencies.

USICH Outcome: Cross-Cutting Outcome.

| Key Activities: | Quarter | Year | Committee |
|---|---|---|---|
| Survey YHI partnering agencies to develop comprehensive list of funders currently supporting youth homelessness prevention | Q4 | 2016 | Funding Committee Data & Research |

**Strategy 3:** Engage funders to garner their support of YHI (including survey of interest, planning a convening of funders, development of Funders Tool Kit.

USICH Outcome: Cross-Cutting Outcome.

| Key Activities: | Quarter | Year | Committee |
|---|---|---|---|
| Create survey ascertaining funder interest in supporting youth homelessness prevention programs | Q4 | 2016 | Funding |
| Conduct survey with funder contacts obtained through Strategy 2 | Q4 | 2016 | Funding |
| Plan and Host local funders convening in South Florida | Q2 | 2016 | Funding |
| Develop and distribute Funders Toolkit for supporting youth homelessness prevention programs in Miami-Dade/South Florida | Q2 | 2016 | Funding |

**Strategy 4:** Source current grant notifications and work with relevant YHI committee(s) on submitting collaborative grant applications.

USICH Outcome: Cross-Cutting Outcome.

| Key Activities: | Quarter | Year | Committee |
|---|---|---|---|
| Identify current grant notifications, alert YHI partners, and assist YHI committees in submitting collaborative grant applications (Ongoing) | Q4 Ongoing | 2016 Ongoing | Funding |

| Strategy 5: Support the development of appropriate marketing materials about YHI to foundations and government funders. | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| USICH Outcome:  Cross-Cutting Outcome. | | | |
| Key Activities: | Quarter | Year | Committee |
| Work with newly organized PR/Outreach Committee to develop YHI marketing materials specifically targeted to private foundations and government funders | Q4 | 2016 | Funding PR/Outreach |
| Newly Organized Committee: Action Steps to be developed in September/October 2016 | Q4 | 2016 | PR/Outreach |


| **YHI Issue-Area: Public Relations and Outreach.** Develops public relations and media strategies specifically targeted towards the public to increase awareness of youth homelessness in Miami-Dade County and to engage the community in actively participating in the movement to prevent and end youth homelessness.  Develops outreach strategies directed towards youth experiencing homelessness to better connect youth with existing resources and supportive services. | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Strategy 1:**  Marketing and outreach to local Miami-Dade County shelters to build awareness of the experiences/needs of unaccompanied homeless youth and services offered through YHI partners. | | | |
| USICH Outcome:  Cross-Cutting Outcome. | | | |
| Key Activities: | Quarter | Year | Committee |
| Newly Organized Committee: Action Steps to be developed in September/October 2016 | Q4 | 2016 | PR/Outreach |
| **Strategy 2:**  Awareness/Outreach to youth clients of local agencies and YHI partners. | | | |
| USICH Outcome: Cross-Cutting Outcome. | | | |
| Key Activities: | Quarter | Year | Committee |
| Newly Organized Committee: Action Steps to be developed in September/October 2016 | Q4 | 2016 | PR/Outreach |
| **Strategy 3:**  Support the development of appropriate marketing materials about YHI to foundations and government funders. | | | |
| USICH Outcome:  Cross-Cutting Outcome. | | | |
| Key Activities: | Quarter | Year | Committee |
| Newly Organized Committee: Action Steps to be developed in September/October 2016 | Q4 | 2016 | PR/Outreach |
| **Strategy 4:**  Expand the number of hospitals and clinics with information and awareness necessary to appropriately serve homeless youth. | | | |
| USICH Outcome:  Cross-Cutting Outcome. | | | |
| Key Activities: | Quarter | Year | Committee |
| Newly Organized Committee: Action Steps to be developed in September/October 2016 | Q4 | 2016 | PR/Outreach |
| **Strategy 5:** Develop youth-driven awareness and outreach organization/club at MDCPS High Schools (may be housed in existing student organization). | | | |
| USICH Outcome:  Cross-Cutting Outcome. | | | |
| Key Activities: | Quarter | Year | Committee |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Newly Organized Committee: Action Steps to be developed in September/October 2016 | Q4 | 2016 | PR/Outreach |

**YHI Issue-Area: Youth Voice and Youth Engagement.** The Youth Voice-Advisory Council amplifies the voice and perspectives of youth with lived experience in the YHI planning process. The Youth Voice-Advisory Council reviews and provides feedback on every strategy of the YHI Issue-Area Committees. In addition, the Youth Committee Working Group engages youth from across the community, including youth with lived experience and other youth advocates and leaders, to create awareness of, and eliminate the stigma surrounding, youth homelessness.

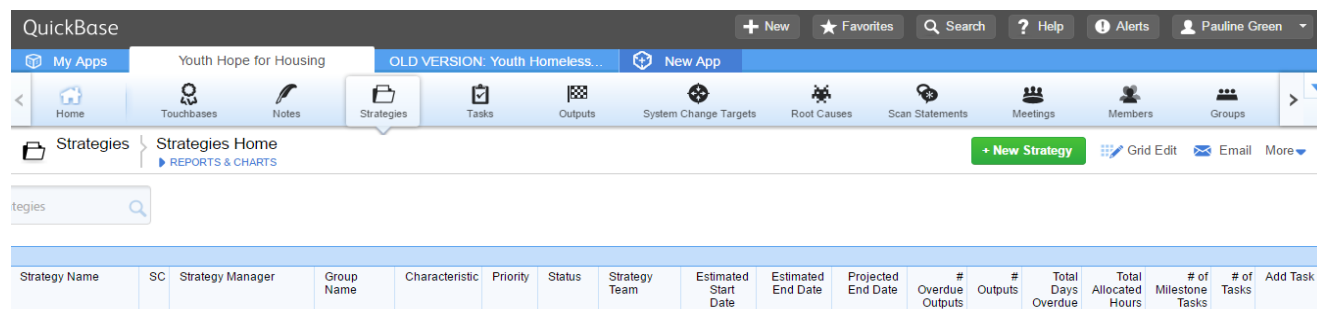| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Strategy 1:** Ensure Youth Voice is prioritized in the development of the system-of-care design and that youth recommendations are included in strategy implementation | | | |
| USICH Outcome: Cross-Cutting Outcome. | | | |
| Key Activities: | Quarter | Year | Committee |
| Conduct bi-monthly meetings with Youth Voice-Advisory Council to gain feedback on strategy implementation, current state of services provided by YHI partners, and recommendation for improvement (Ongoing) | Q4 Ongoing | 2016 Ongoing | Steering Committee |
| Engage youth from various YHI partnering organizations to participate in feedback loop; alternate meeting sites (Ongoing) | Q4 Ongoing | 2016 Ongoing | Steering Committee |
| Engage Miami Dade College and FIU students with lived experience and provide opportunity for input on strategies | Q4 Ongoing | 2016 Ongoing | Steering Committee |
| **Strategy 2:** Develop youth-driven awareness and outreach organization/club at MDCPS High Schools (may be housed in existing student organization). | | | |
| USICH Outcome: Cross-Cutting Outcome. | | | |
| Identify student organizations at various MDCPS High Schools that will adopt awareness of youth homelessness as primary advocacy issue for 2016-2017 academic year | Q2 | 2016 | Youth Working Group |
| Develop awareness campaign at MDCPS High Schools for Homeless Awareness Week | Q4 | 2016 | Youth Working Group |
| Additional Action Steps to be determined as Youth Working Group reconvenes in September 2016 | Q4 | 2016 | Youth Working Group |

# Appendix B: Performance Measures and Collective Database

**Tracking Progress – Subcommittee Strategies and Action Steps**

On a monthly basis, Strategy Champions will provide updates to their respective subcommittee and subcommittee Co-Chairs.  On a quarterly basis, Subcommittee Co-Chairs will provide detailed progress reports on the status of each Strategy and its corresponding Action Steps to the YHI Steering Committee.

Backbone staff will provide ongoing administrative support to Strategy Champions and Subcommittee Co-Chairs to ensure that progress is tracked accurately and consistently using the YHI QuickBase System, a performance and project management tracking tool that details Strategy characteristics, task assignments, milestones, status, etc.  A sample of the performance management tracking tool is below.



**Annual Report**

The Miami-Dade Youth Homelessness Initiative will produce a comprehensive Annual Report that will be shared with the community at a Youth Homelessness Summit to be held each year in late summer or early fall.  The Annual Report will provide an overview of the initiative's collective progress towards the goal of preventing and ending homelessness among unaccompanied youth by 2020.

**Updated Strategic Plan**

Large scale systems-change requires flexibility and adaptability.  The Miami-Dade Youth Homeless Initiative has adopted the Collective Impact Model and the ABLe Change Framework to guide our community collaborative as we pursue transformative, systemic change to address the needs of youth experiencing homelessness in Miami-Dade.  The YHI recognizes that the development of a comprehensive, effective system-of-care design will be an iterative learning process and will demand adaptability as we learn more about the needs of youth experiencing homelessness, the current resources available to effectively serve those needs, and existing gaps in knowledge and services that need to be addressed.  As the Initiative progresses, the YHI Strategic Plan will be modified and adapted to reflect any amendments to existing strategies and to include additional strategies developed at the Subcommittee level.  The current Strategic Plan is intended to be a starting point and is the first iteration of the Miami-Dade County Youth Homelessness Initiative's plan to prevent and end homelessness by 2020.

## Appendix C: YHI Partnering Organizations and Agencies

The Alliance for GLBTQ Youth
Atlantic Pacific Communities
The Alternative Programs, Inc.
Aqua Foundation for Women
Camillus Health
Camillus House
Career Source South Florida
Carrfour Supportive Housing
Casa Valentina
The Children's Trust
Chrysalis Health
Citrus Health Network
Community Health of South Florida, Inc.
Department of Children and Families
Educate Tomorrow
Fetch Data, LLC
Florida Foster Care Review
Florida International University – College of
Public Health and Social Work
Florida International University – Fostering
Panther Pride
Florida International University – Office of
Engagement
Holy Faith Missionary Baptist Church
Jackson Health System - Jackson Community
Mental Health Center
Jackson Health System- Jackson Memorial
Hospital/Holtz Children's Hospital
Jackson Health System- Jackson Behavioral
Health
Kristi House
Legal Services of Greater Miami

Lotus House – The Sundari Foundation, Inc.
Miami Bridge Youth & Family Services
Miami Dade College
Miami-Dade Community Based Care Alliance
Miami-Dade County Public Schools
Miami-Dade County Juvenile Services
Department
Miami-Dade County Homeless Trust
Miami-Dade Office of the State Attorney, 11th
Judicial Circuit
Miami Homes For All
Miami's River of Life
Neighbors For Neighbors
Our Kids of Miami-Dade/Monroe, Inc.
Pridelines Youth Services
South Florida Behavioral Health Network
Switchboard of Miami-Family Counseling
Services
Trinity Church
True Colors Fund – Forty to None Project
United Way of Miami-Dade
University of Miami
University of Miami School of Law
University of Miami School of Medicine –
Connect To Protect
West Kendall Baptist Hospital – Baptist Health
South Florida
The Women's Fund
Youth Co-Op, Inc.
4 Generations Institute
11th Judicial Circuit Guardian Ad Litem Program

## Appendix D: YHI Sponsors and Funding Partners

The Children's Trust
Health Foundation of South Florida
Miami-Dade County Homeless Trust
The Miami Foundation
Miami Homes For All
The Peacock Foundation

# Appendix E: Definitions of "Homeless"

**Federal Definition of "Homeless" (24 CFR 578.3)**

*Homeless* means:

(1) An individual or family who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, meaning:

(i) An individual or family with a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings, including a car, park, abandoned building, bus or train station, airport, or camping ground;

(ii) An individual or family living in a supervised publicly or privately operated shelter designated to provide temporary living arrangements (including congregate shelters, transitional housing, and hotels and motels paid for by charitable organizations or by federal, State, or local government programs for low-income individuals); or

(iii) An individual who is exiting an institution where he or she resided for 90 days or less and who resided in an emergency shelter or place not meant for human habitation immediately before entering that institution;

(2) An individual or family who will imminently lose their primary nighttime residence, provided that:

(i) The primary nighttime residence will be lost within 14 days of the date of application for homeless assistance;

(ii) No subsequent residence has been identified; and

(iii) The individual or family lacks the resources or support networks, *e.g.,* family, friends, faith-based or other social networks, needed to obtain other permanent housing;

(3) Unaccompanied youth under 25 years of age, or families with children and youth, who do not otherwise qualify as homeless under this definition, but who:

(i) Are defined as homeless under section 387 of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (42 U.S.C. 5732a), section 637 of the Head Start Act (42 U.S.C. 9832), section 41403 of the Violence Against Women Act of 1994 (42 U.S.C. 14043e-2), section 330(h) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 254b(h)), section 3 of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2012), section 17(b) of the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 (42 U.S.C. 1786(b)), or section 725 of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11434a);

(ii) Have not had a lease, ownership interest, or occupancy agreement in permanent housing at any time during the 60 days immediately preceding the date of application for homeless assistance;

(iii) Have experienced persistent instability as measured by two moves or more during the 60-day period immediately preceding the date of applying for homeless assistance; and

(iv) Can be expected to continue in such status for an extended period of time because of chronic disabilities; chronic physical health or mental health conditions; substance addiction; histories of domestic violence or childhood abuse (including neglect); the presence of a child or youth with a

disability; or two or more barriers to employment, which include the lack of a high school degree or General Education Development (GED), illiteracy, low English proficiency, a history of incarceration or detention for criminal activity, and a history of unstable employment; or

(4) Any individual or family who:

(i) Is fleeing, or is attempting to flee, domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or other dangerous or life-threatening conditions that relate to violence against the individual or a family member, including a child, that has either taken place within the individual's or family's primary nighttime residence or has made the individual or family afraid to return to their primary nighttime residence;

(ii) Has no other residence; and

(iii) Lacks the resources or support networks, *e.g.,* family, friends, and faith-based or other social networks, to obtain other permanent housing.

**Section 725 of McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 USC 11434a)**

The term "homeless children and youths"—
**(A)** means individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence; and
**(B)** includes—
**(i)** children and youths who are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason; are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters; are abandoned in hospitals; or are awaiting foster care placement;
**(ii)** children and youths who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings;
**(iii)** children and youths who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and
**(iv)** migratory children who qualify as homeless for the purposes of this part because the children are living in circumstances described in clauses (i) through (iii).

**Section 387 of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (42 U.S.C. 5732a)**

**(3)HOMELESS YOUTH** The term "homeless", used with respect to a youth, means an individual—
**(A)**who is—
**(i)** less than 21 years of age, or, in the case of a youth seeking shelter in a center under part A of this subchapter, less than 18 years of age, or is less than a higher maximum age if the State where the center is located has an applicable State or local law (including a regulation) that permits such higher maximum age in compliance with licensure requirements for child-and youth-serving facilities; and
**(ii)**for the purposes of part B of this subchapter, not less than 16 years of age and either—

**(I)**less than 22 years of age; or

**(II)** not less than 22 years of age, as of the expiration of the maximum period of stay permitted under section 5714–2(a)(2) of this title if such individual commences such stay before reaching 22 years of age;

**(B)**for whom it is not possible to live in a safe environment with a relative; and

**(C)** who has no other safe alternative living arrangement.


**Section 3 of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C 2012)**
**(I)** "Homeless individual" means—

**(1)** an individual who lacks a fixed and regular nighttime residence; or

**(2)** an individual who has a primary nighttime residence that is—

**(A)** a supervised publicly or privately operated shelter (including a welfare hotel or congregate shelter) designed to provide temporary living accommodations;

**(B)** an institution that provides a temporary residence for individuals intended to be institutionalized;

**(C)** a temporary accommodation for not more than 90 days in the residence of another individual; or

**(D)**a public or private place not designed for, or ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings.


**Section 330(h) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 254b(h))**
**(A)Homeless individual**
The term "homeless individual" means an individual who lacks housing (without regard to whether the individual is a member of a family), including an individual whose primary residence during the night is a supervised public or private facility that provides temporary living accommodations and an individual who is a resident in transitional housing.


**State of Florida Definition of "Homeless" (F.S. 420.621(5))**

"Homeless," applied to an individual, or "individual experiencing homelessness" means an individual who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence and includes an individual who:

   (a)   Is sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason;

   (b)   Is living in a motel, hotel, travel trailer park, or camping ground due to a lack of alternative adequate accommodations;

   (c)   Is living in an emergency or transitional shelter;

   (d)   Has a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for, or ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings;

   (e)   Is living in a car, park, public space, abandoned building, bus or train station, or similar setting; or

   (f)   Is a migratory individual who qualifies as homeless because he or she is living in circumstances described in paragraphs (a)-(e).